



THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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COVID TAKES OUT THE CRUISE FUN

A tourist bus arrives at the International Cruise Terminal in Mumbai to pick up passengers from the anchored Cordelia cruise ship on Wednesday. More than 2,000 passengers aboard the ship have been stuck after 66 of them tested positive for Covid off the Goa coast a few days ago, from where it returned | P 11

How it happened

10.19 AM
Prime Minister Narendra Modi lands at Bhisiana Air Force Station in Bathinda

11.05 AM
Modi leaves for Ferozepur by road

1.05 PM
Farmers block Ferozepur-Moga main road near Piyarena village

1.25 PM
PM's cavalcade turns back

3.19 PM
Modi takes off from the Bhisiana Air Force Station in Bathinda

Factoids

2 HOURS
Travel time from Bathinda to Ferozepur

111 KM
Distance between Bathinda and Ferozepur by road

The Ministry of Home Affairs has sought a detailed report on the security breach in Punjab. Such dereliction of security procedure in the Prime Minister's visit is totally unacceptable and accountability will be fixed

Amrit Shah, Union home minister

The PM's plan to travel by road was made at the last minute. I was up till late last night overseeing security arrangements for his rally

Punjab CM Charanjit Singh Channi



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's convoy (L) stuck on a flyover in Ferozepur; and farmers stage a demo to block his convoy | P 11



Big security breach forces PM to cancel Punjab event

Ferozepur programmes nixed after protesting farmers block Modi's convoy; triggers massive blame game between BJP and Congress

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Chandigarh/New Delhi

IN what is being described as the first-of-its-kind breach of the Prime Minister's security, the Ferozepur visit of PM Narendra Modi on Wednesday had to be cancelled when a group of farmers blocked the road on which he was travelling. He was scheduled to lay foundation stones of several projects and address a rally there.

His cavalcade was stuck for 15-20 minutes on a flyover some 16 km short of Ferozepur. The PM had to return to Bathinda from where he flew back to Delhi, triggering a major blame game between the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress.

Sources said Modi had landed at Bhisiana Air Force Station in Bathinda and was scheduled to fly to the National Martyrs Memorial at Hussainiwalla near Ferozepur by helicopter. But, the chopper could not take off due to rain and poor visibility. Modi waited for about 20 minutes at the airport but the weather did not improve. So, it was decided he would travel by road. However, his convoy had to stop as some 200 farmers blocked the highway. The Special Protection Group that protects the PM decided to turn back fearing a security risk.

The Union Home ministry has sought a report from the Punjab government and asked it to take strict action for the lapse. The PM proceeded to travel by road only after getting a confirmation on security arrangements by the DGP, Punjab Police, the ministry said.

Deputy Inspector General of Police (Ferozepur Range) Inderbir Singh claimed farmers

took the security personnel and police by surprise. "When I came to know that the farmers have blocked the road I rushed to the spot to convince them but they were adamant and the cavalcade had to turn back," he said. However, sources said four roads, leading to Ferozepur were blocked by farmers at different places from Tuesday night. The siege was lifted only around 7 am in the morning. The farmers also allegedly stopped BJP workers and supporters from reaching rally site.

While the politicians blamed each other for the incident, the security establishment appeared to be divided over which agency was ultimately responsible for the lapse. A senior official said although the state police are involved in the security of the PM, even an alternate route has to be vetted and cleared by the SPG. A retired DGP said providing security on all routes is the state police's job and alternative routes are always kept ready for any exigency.

BJP president JP Nadda slammed the Punjab government. "Fearing a resounding defeat at the hands of the electorate, the Congress Government in Punjab tried all possible tricks to scuttle the Prime Minister," he tweeted.

Former Punjab CM Amarinder Singh demanded President's rule in the state. "It is a complete failure of law and order. When you can't provide smooth passage to the Prime Minister you have no right to stay in office," he said.

However, Punjab CM Charanjit Singh claimed there was no security lapse. "We regret that he had to go back and we are pained. We respect our Prime Minister," he said.

3 Bidar doctors get jail term for botched surgery

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bidar

FOUR people, including three doctors, have been handed jail terms and slapped with fines by a local court for a botched surgery which claimed the life of a woman.

The II Civil (senior) and JMFC Court Judge Abdul Khadar sentenced well-known medical practitioners Dr Rajshree Biradar and Dr Varjinsth Biradar, and Saibanna, to two years imprisonment and fined them Rs 10,000 each. If they fail to pay the fine, they will have to serve an additional six months in prison. Dr Rajshree Patil was sentenced to six months imprisonment and fined Rs 5,000. He will have to serve additional imprisonment of one month if he fails to pay the fine.

The case dates back to October 12, 2014, when Sampavati, wife of Ghaleppa Auradkar, got herself admitted to Sushrut Nursing Home in the city for a hysterectomy procedure. But after a five-hour surgery, she died due to alleged medical negligence.

However, without disclosing her condition to the family, she was shifted to Dr Rajshree Patil's Shree Hospital in an ambulance. Dr Patil continued the treatment without disclosing her condition, it was alleged in the chargesheet.

Happy New Year January 2022

ಕೆವಲ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಪ್ರಾದೇಶಿಕ ಅಂಗಡಿ ಮಾಲಿಕರಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ

2nd January, 2022 ರಿಂದ ಪ್ರಾರಂಭ, ಸಂಪರ್ಕಿಸಿ 7459080808

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Next 4-6 weeks crucial; new cases almost double in state

CHETANA BELAGERE @ Bengaluru

THE latest Covid-19 surge, possibly fuelled by the super-contagious Omicron variant, could last another month or more, health experts believe.

On Wednesday, Karnataka witnessed a sharp rise in its day positivity rate to 3.33 per cent with fresh Covid-19 cases rising sharply by 71.27 per cent in 24 hours — from 2,479 cases on Tuesday to 4,246 on Wednesday. And, 84.90 per cent of the cases are being reported from Bengaluru, which added 3,605 cases to the day's tally.

So intense has been the surge

that the state's active cases have risen by 28.68 per cent from 13,532 on Tuesday to 17,414 on Wednesday, while that of the state capital shot up by 29.23 per cent from 11,423 to 14,762 overnight.

Warning people to be watchful of the spike, Health Minister Dr K Sudhakar said the next four to six weeks will be crucial and that the peak in cases needs to be watched out for. "The state government, based on experts' opinion, has imposed stricter restrictions to contain the surge. But the next four to six weeks are crucial and only if people cooperate can we help the situation from not getting any worse," he said.

B'luru virologist's test kit for Omicron variant cuts delays

BALA CHAUHAN @ Bengaluru

IN a major and global breakthrough towards cutting down procedural delays in genome sequencing to ascertain the Omicron variant of SARS-CoV2, Dr V Ravi, former head of the Department of Neurovirology at National Institute of Mental Health & Neuro Sciences and Head, Research & Development, Tata Medical & Diagnostic Centre, Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu, and his team have developed the world's first test kit, Omisure, that can detect the Omicron variant by combining S-gene target failure (SGTF) and S-gene mutation amplification (SGMA).

"Omisure was approved by the Indian Council of Medical Research on December 30 and, on Wednesday, Tata MD received the licence from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation for commercial production," announced Dr Ravi.

NATIONWIDE		JAN 4	JAN 5	K'TAMA		JAN 4	JAN 5
Fresh cases	32,379	58,097		Fresh cases	2,479	4,246	
Recoveries	11,007	15,389		Recoveries	288	362	
Deaths	124	534		Deaths	4	2	

TAKE YOUR SHOT
Jan 4 82,66,164 doses
Jan 5 82,26,211 doses
TOTAL 1,64,87,375

STATE-WISE SNAPSHOT

States	Active cases (7 days avg)	Active cases as on Jan 5	Change	% Contribution towards cases
MAHARASHTRA	15,179	70,005	4.81x	32.71%
WEST BENGAL	7,457	25,475	3.42x	11.90%
KERALA	21,086	20,877	0.99x	9.76%
DELHI	1,812	14,889	9.24x	6.99%
KARNATAKA	7,485	13,561	1.81x	6.34%
TAMIL NADU	6,557	12,412	1.90x	5.80%

2.69 India's R naught value now, which shows spread of the infection, is higher than the 1.69 recorded during peak second wave

50% Present hospitalisation rate in Mumbai. In 2020, the national figure was close to 20%



TPR zooms, new cases up by 55%+

SUMI SUKANYA DUTTA @ New Delhi

ON a day India confirmed its first death due to Omicron — a 73-year-old fully vaccinated man in Rajasthan who had several comorbidities — the country reported over 55% rise in fresh infections. Also, the test positivity rate (TPR) shot up 6.3 times in just eight days.

The country on Wednesday recorded 58,097 new Covid-19 cases while the number of confirmed Omicron cases reached 2,125 and the rolling average of weekly test positivity rate climbed to 2.6%. Top health authorities sounded alarm bells on increasing cases and test positivity, while saying early trends suggest hospitalisations are low as compared to that during the second wave.

Experts, however, expressed concern that with the exponential surge, hospitalisations too will go up, leading to overwhelmed health systems. Maharashtra, West Bengal, Delhi, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Jharkhand, Gujarat are states of major concern.

West Bengal has the highest weekly test positivity rate of more than 16%. P 9

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You must provide the following to the DP to open your DEMAT account:

- Recent photograph
- PAN Card
- Address proof
- Cancelled cheque

The DP may also seek further information.

Contact your banker or broker for any assistance.

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*Details of proposed IPO will be intimated once finalised.

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